



SPACE OVER TWO FLOORS: Phase Eight will open a flagship store in Milsom Place

Leading chain to open flagship store

One of the UK's leading fashion retailers is due to open a flagship store in the centre of Bath.

Phase Eight is the latest big name to sign up to the £13 million Milsom Place retail development after securing 3,000 sq ft of space over two floors.

The clothing store is due to open in September as part of the complex which will also include a 200-seater Italian restaurant from TV chef Jamie Oliver.

Milsom Place is to revitalise the former Shires Yard centre while featuring a complete redevelopment of the neighbouring Octagon building.

Work began on site in spring last year and although developer The L&R Group is now two months behind schedule, the project is still working to its original budget.

Principal building work was due to be finished by May but L&R director Sarah Mansfield said the majority of construction would now be completed by the end of this month.

Milsom Place has been designed

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to house 26 shops and four restaurants over three levels and two courtyards with the hope of creating a network of avenues and alleyways connecting the stores and eateries between Milsom Street and Broad Street.

Jamie's Italian was scheduled for a July opening but it is now not expected to start serving customers until early October.

Mrs Mansfield said work had been delayed due to complications with listed buildings.

She said: "We are a couple of months behind on the principal building work."

The first building work began with the refurbishment of the Grade I listed Octagon Chapel which was formerly home to the Royal Photographic Society.

No official opening date has been set for Milsom Place as a whole and several retailers,

including Cath Kidston and Hobbs, are already trading there.

Mrs Mansfield said: "When you are refurbishing an existing shopping centre it is never going to be the easiest time for retailers already trading there.

"No one enjoys the building work going on but everyone wants to have it done because the end result will be better."

The L&R director said Jamie's Italian was being fitted out by teams working seven days a week.

Simon Blagden, managing director of Jamie's Italian, said he was not concerned by the delayed opening date.

He said: "We are confident that it doesn't matter when you open; this is a new restaurant in town and it's Jamie Oliver."

The first Jamie's Italian restaurant opened in Oxford as a pilot store in June and a further 20 are expected across the UK over the next five years.

The company's head office will be in Bath and it is now looking to recruit up to 60 local staff.